

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-08 SP-02 USIA-15 AID-05 NSC-05
TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-07 OMB-01 CEA-01 CIAE-00
DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-02 AGRE-00 /082 W
-----089062 021522Z /41

P 011606Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE
TO USDOC WASHDC PRIORITY
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 4757
AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMCONSUL DOUALA POUCH

UNCLAS YAOUNDE 1039

COMMERCE FROM ATKINS FOR WANDA ALE

E.O. 11652 N/A
TAGS: BEXP, CM
SUBJECT: AGRIBUSINESS SEMINAR MISSION TO CAMEROON - COORDINATOR S
REPORT

REF: YAOUNDE 964

1. SUMMARY: THE RECEPTION ACCORDED THE SEMINAR MISSION IN CAMEROON CAN ONLY BE DESCRIBED AS EXCEPTIONAL. INTENSE INTEREST AND EXTREME COURTESY OF SENIOR LEVEL CAMEROONIAN OFFICIALS IN BOTH THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS IS DUE PRINCIPALLY TO THE OUTSTANDING ADVANCE WORK BY JOHN HOLMAN SENIOR ECON/COMMERCIAL OFFICER AND THE AMBASSADOR S AND DCM S PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE ARRANGEMENTS. ASST. ECON/COMM OFFICER BURKE AND DOUALA ACTING PRINCIPAL OFFICER TRECHTER DID EXCELLENT JOB IN INSURING SMOOTH FUNCTIONING ALL ASPECTS OF MISSION. AMBASSADOR S OPENING REMARKS AT THE SEMINAR SESSIONS BOTH IN YAOUNDE AND DOUALA ADDED PRESTIGE AND IMPACT TO THE PROCEEDINGS. THE LOGISTICS WERE OUTSTANDING. HIGHLIGHT OF THE DOUALA PORTION OF THE VISIT WAS THE
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INVOLVEMENT OF NFON MUKETE, CHAIRMAN AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF CAMEROON DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION, (CDC). MUKETE SERVED AS THE SPOKES-MAN FOR THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, INDUSTRY AND MINES (WHICH JOINTLY SPONSORED MISSION) IN THIS CAPACITY AS FIRST VICE PRESIDENT. HE REMAINED THROUGH

THE WHOLE SEMINAR, RETURNED DURING THE AFTERNOON SESSIONS AT THE BIC, HOSTED THE CHAMBER'S RECEPTION, AND ESCORTED THE FIELD TRIP TO CDC.

ACTUAL SALES DURING THE EVENT TOTALED DOLLARS 41,000 AND ONE DISTRIBU

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TNORSHIP WAS SIGNED

2. PERTINENT STATISTICAL REUSULTS OF THE MISSION ARE AS FOLLOWS:

A) SALES LEADS OBTAINED 20, B) LEADS FOR DISTRIBUTORSHIP 8., C) TOTAL NUMBER OF CONTACTS THROUGH PERSONAL INTERVIEWS AND VISITS 23 (NOTE: 18 PROSPECTIVE BUYERS RETURNED FOR PRIVATE INTERVIEWS WITH PARTICIPANTS AFTER THE SEMINAR, RESULTING IN ANOTHER 24 CONTACTS. D) ACTUAL SALES DURING EVENT DOLLARS 41,000, E) PROJECTED 12 MONTHS SALES DOLLARS 500,000, F) ONE DISTRIBUTOR SIGNED DURING THE EVENT AND 4 PROJECTED DURING THE NEXT 12 MONTHS. G) ALL PARTICIPANTS MET THEIR OBJECTIVES.

3. FROM ITS INCEPTION, THE SEMINAR MISSION WORKED LIKE CLOCKWORK. EXPEDITING AND TRANSFER TO YAOUNDE ACCOMPLISHED WITH PRECEISION WHICH SIGNIFICANTLY LIFTED MORALE AFTER 12 HOURS OF TRAVEL. THE VISIT TO CAMSUCO'S SUGAR MILL AND PLANTATION ON SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19 WAS MISSION'S FIRST EXPOSURE TO AFRICAN AGRICULTURE IN PRACTICE. TVUBASSY BRIEFOMR OPENING WITT AMBASSADOR SN JWZ EXCELLENT PRESENTATION LAID A GOOD FOUNDATION FOR SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS.

4. OFFICIAL MEMBERS OF THE GROUP INCLUDED THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, THE NATIONAL INVESTMENT CORPRATION (SNI) AND THE MINISTRY UNCLASSIFIED

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OF ECONOMY AND PLAN. NOTEWORTHY WAS THE PARTICIPATION BY SENIOR LEVEL CAMEROONIAN OFFICIAL IN THE MEETINGS.

5. THE SEMINAR SESSION AT THE MT. FEBE, YAOUNDE, WAS OPENEDONUY THE AMBASSADOR AND REGISTERED 33 GUBFE. THE PRESENTATION WAS ACCOMPLISHED VERY SUCCESSFULLY AND MISSION MEMBERS WERE UNANIMOUS IN ASSESSING THE SEMINAR APPROACH AS INSTRUMENTAL TO THE OVERALL SUCCESS OF THE MISSION. THE SEMINAR WAS REPEATED THE FOLLOWING MORNING IN DOUALA, WHERE THE AMBASSADOR AGAIN OPENED THE SESSIONS. REGISTRATION TOTALLED 41 PEOPLE. SIGNIFICANTLY, THE LEVEL OF CAMEROONIAN PARTICIPATION WAS HIGH, BOTH IN NUMBER AND QUALITY. RECOGNITION OF THE MUTUAL OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED BY DELEGATIONS OF THIS NATURE PLAYED A PART IN THE EXTREMELY CORDIAL RECEPTION AFFORDED THE GROUP ON ALL OCCASIONS.

6. THE HOSPITALITY FUNCTIONS WERE EVEN MORE SUCCESSFUL THAN THE EMBASSY HAD ANTICIPATED. THE AMBASSADORS RECEPTION ON OPENING DAY HAD 65 GUESTS, THE FOLLOWING DAYS LUNCHEON HOSTED BY THE DCM DREW 32 GUESTS OUT OF THE 35 INVITED. ON

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY '79 THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
HOSTED A RECEPTION,

AT THEIR EXPENSE, WHICH HAD 40 GUESTS.

CHIEF MUKETE, CHAIRMAN OF CDC ACTED AS OFFICIAL HOST
AND ADDED CONSIDERABLE PRESTIGE BY HIS PRESENCE. THE DCM
HEADED THE U.S. CONTINGENT.

7. THE FINALE OF THE MISSION WAS AN EXCELLENTLY EXECUTED
FIELDTRIP TO CDC'S TEA, RUBBER, PALM, OIL AND BANANA PLANTATIONS
AND FACILITIES AND A WELL ATTENDED BUFFET DINNER HOSTED BY CONSUL
KEN SCOTT . CHIEF MUKETE ESCORTED THE GROUP
TO CDC IN AN
UNPRECEDENTED SHOW OF COURTESY.
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8. PARTICIPANT COMMENTS: INMAN ELLIS OF OPICO SAID THAT:
"WHILE THE INITIAL SALES MAY BE SMALL, IN THE LONG RUN,
THE INVESTMENT WILL BE PAID OFF BY SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASED SALES.
I AM CONVINCED THAT THE WEST AFRICAN MARKET IS WELL WORTH
OUR EFFORTS" (CLEARED FOR PUBLICATION) EDWIN JUWETT OF
ARKEL INTERNATIONAL STATES: "THE LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION BY
CAMEROONIAN GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS IN THE TRADE MISSION FUNCTIONS
GIVES REASON FOR OPTIMISM THAT THERE IS INTEREST IN HAVING
DIVERSIFIED BUSINESS PARTICIPATION IN THEIR DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAM". (CLEARED FOR PUBLICATION) PAUL DE RAHM OF IRRIGATION
AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORP SUMMARIZED THE CONSENSUS OF
OPINION BY SAYING 'DURING A VERY BRIEF PERIOD WE WERE ABLE
TO ASSESS THE FULL SCOPE OF THE AGRICULTURAL MARKET IN
CAMEROON. MEETING FIRST WITH THE AGRICULTURAL LEADERS IN
YAOUNDE GAVE US EXCELLENT BACKGROUND WHICH WAS SUBSEQUENTLY
HELPFUL WHEN WE MADE OUR COMMERCIAL CONTACTS IN DOUAL
WERE IT NOT FOR THE "OFFICIAL" NATURE OF THIS MISSION, MANY OF
THE CONTACTS WOULD HAVE BEEN IMPOSSIBLE TO MAKE. OBVIOUSLY,
MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS MISSION WAS A VITAL FACTOR
IN SETTING UP OUR NEW DISTRIBUTOR IN DOUALA" (CLEARED FOR
PUBLICATION)

9. CONCLUSION: THE WEEK LONG EVENT, WITH TWO STOPS, ONE AT
THE POLITICAL CENTER AND THE OTHER AT THE COMMERCIAL CENTER,
DEMONSTRATED THE EFFICACY OF PROVIDING ENOUGH TIME FOR ABSORBING
MARKET INFORMATION GIVING FORMAL PRESENTATIONS, AND MAKING
MEANINGFUL CONTACTS. THE OVERALL IMPACT WAS ENHANCED BY THE
LONGER STAY AND WAS REFLECTED IN THE EXTENSIVE PRESS COVERAGE
(SEE REFTEL) AND INCREASED GOVERNMENT INTEREST. THE IMPRESSION HAS
BEEN LEFT THAT THE U.S.G. RECOGNISE THE IMPORTANCE OF AGRICULTURAL
DEVELOPMENT TO CAMEROON AND IS COMMITTED TO ENCOURAGING U.S.
FIRMS TO RESPOND TO OPPORTUNITIES HERE AS A CONTINUING AND PRI-
ORITY POLICY. THE BUSINESSMEN THEMSELVES ARE ANXIOUS TO
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FOLLOW UP ON THE VALUABLE CONTACTS MADE.

10. BUDGET DATA TO FOLLOW SEPTTEL.
SMYTHE

NOTE BY OC/T: MESSAGE AS RECEIVED.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978YAOUND01039
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780095-1115
Format: TEL
From: YAOUNDE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197803117/aaaadvna.tel
Line Count: 181
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 33f03dba-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Reference: 78 YAOUNDE 964
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3147478
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AGRIBUSINESS SEMINAR MISSION TO CMAERON - COORDINATOR S REPORT
TAGS: BEXP, CM
To: COM
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/33f03dba-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014